

LAUGHING LUCK

One day while sitting on loafer's bench smoking Prince Albert tobacco in genuine imported bir pipes, Bill had a laughing fit. Some joke or something had caused a little ripple of mirth, which grew and grew. I never in all my life saw a man enjoy a laugh better. Even tears stood in Bill's eyes shining like Ford headlights.

"Bill, you sure enjoy a joke, don't you?" I asked, trying to get the uproar to a ceasing point.

"Yes, my lad, that makes me think of a laugh I had when a boy."

"In the early winter of 1834, in fact, it was up in December, after we had just survived a big snow storm. I went to church one Sabbath morning. Now I am not going to tell you what church, because it goes against a Democrat to tell what church he is affiliated with, anyways I went."

The church was built of logs, with mud daubed between the cracks, and split slabs made the floor. The building was thirty feet square, with a large fire place built in the North side.

This generation can't conceive of the idea, but we men folks always carried our guns along, and while the services were in progress two or three of the best marksmen were acting as guards; that is they carried their guns in their hands.

The preacher, one of those circuit-riders, always started on time, and closed on time; two hours after beginning. A fair crowd had gathered on this dreary cold wintery day, but the house was nice and cozy due to the great pile of hickory logs blazing in the fire place.

As the preacher drew his sermon to a close, he stepped down from the pulpit, to lead the closing hymn. Back in those days preachers could sing. You never in your life, then, saw a preacher have a man to sing or act as choir leader. The preachers earned their money, so they led the singing. Being a man of about two hundred pounds avoirdupois, as he made his descension, he stepped upon one of the short ends of a floor slab, and down he went. Bobbie Ransom, a small chap, had just started to go nearer the fire, and as luck would have it, he went up riding one end of the slab while the preacher went down riding the other. Bobbie was scared nearly helpless, but he finally found his voice. "Help! Help! I'm gone!"

Now Bobbie's dad was one of the church guards. He was sitting by the fire peacefully snoozing, but when Bobbie's startling cry sounded throughout the church, the old man somehow let his gun off. The bullet went thru the roof doing no harm, but just then Bobbie fell sprawling into his dad's lap.

"Land's sakes, the mountains are falling, is the end here?" whispered Bobbie's dad, as he sprung to his feet and rushed out towards the center of the room.

"No," shouted Bobbie, but it's coming, look out!"

It was too late for the floor slab took the old man across the head as it came back towards its resting place. "Indians," cried Bobbie's dad as he was knocked senseless upon the floor.

Well the services were over then, everybody were rushing around trying to do something; that was everyone except old man Ransom, who was as still as a corpse.

But cool water and plenty of rubbing finally brought the renewed life, and he sat up, "Well, boys is the fighting over?"

We all laughed and explained how everything actually was, then he began to laugh. I know I laughed a solid hour.

Well, that Sunday I was invited to go over to Willie Brown's home to take dinner, yes even more than that, to spend the evening and come back with Willie to the night services. Willie Brown was my gal's name, a sweet little blonde of about eighteen summers and one hundred and eighty pounds.

Willie's Pa and Ma, brothers and sisters together with the preacher were right along with us, so I whispered to Willie to walk up and we would go ahead and have a fire built. Willie's Ma already had the dinner cooked, but she had to warm up the roasts and bread.

We had a roaring big fire going when the others arrived, so within a few minutes we were seated around the table.

Willie's folks had a habit of starting a dish at the head of the table, and letting it go around and back to the head of the table. And a dish had to be a large one to go around and not be empty, for Willie had seven sisters and nine brothers.

I was seated near the preacher, next to the head of the table. When he started the roasted venison around, my but that platter must have had fifteen pounds of meat on it. "Brother Brown, my leg is beginning to pain quite a bit, where I hurt it going thru that church floor."

Just before I had time to set the meat down to help myself, the hateful thing slipped and fell onto an immense bowl of buckle berries. The juice and berries flew like a cloud of smoke. The preacher was to blame for he made see again the quick way he had of going thru floors, and when I started to laugh that meat took French leaves.

The preacher and I caught the contents from the head down.

"Young man," he turned to me and angrily said, "if you had more grips and less mirth, you could be more pleasant."

and the juice soon ceased to twinkle down my nose.

The preacher and I both had to borrow shirts from Mr. Brown and we soon had the berry juice washed from our white shirts and they were hung before the fire to dry. Then we finished our meal in peace and harmony.

That afternoon we sat around the fire, ate apples, popped corn and listened to Mr. Brown and the preacher tell about Charleston, Wilmington and other large cities, they had been.

After an early supper we walked back to the church, that is Mrs. and Mr. Brown, Willie the preacher, and myself. The preacher left his horse at Mr. Brown's for he had decided to spend the night there.

The evening services were very short, for most of the people didn't like to be out late at night.

On the way back Willie and I were a short ways in front of the rest of the party. We had to cross Cartoogechage creek on a foot log. Near the center of the creek, Willie said something about how the preach-looked when going thru the floor, and I just had to laugh. I was leading Willie and when I began to laugh, she got unbalanced and fell overboard. Of course, I was thrown also. That water sure was cold and nearly waist deep. Luck was with Willie for a hoop in her dress caught on a snag, which had not been trimmed from the foot log, and there she was hanging head down within two feet of the water.

She screamed for help and I pulled myself together and waded out to the shore. In the meantime her father rushed up, and was trying to help her upon the foot log. I still carried my rifle, which had a large hunting knife tied on the end for a bayonet. Mr. Brown got unbalanced and started to fall backwards. He met my rifle, the bayonet end, and oh! what a scream. "Indians," he yelled and caught himself and dived into the water.

Now the preacher was holding Mr. Brown's rifle, standing on the bank. As Mr. Brown yelled Indians, the preacher threw the rifle down and started racing back down the road. "I'll bring some help quick."

In a few minutes I had wored myself sick trying to get Willie un- hung, but it was in vain. Mrs. Brown was crying for her poor girl's safety and her own, thinking Indians had attacked her husband.

Mr. Brown was no-where to be seen. Shortly the preacher came galloping up the road with several men behind him.

Once a man by name of Gray asked Mrs. Brown where her husband, and the Indians were. Poor soul, she couldn't tell.

A crackling of bushes up the creek, caused Mr. Gray to throw his rifle to his shoulder. A voice cried out, "Look out, you fools. You'll shoot a white man."

It was Mr. Brown, who was trying to locate the Indians.

"Where are the Indians, Mr. Brown?" asked Mr. Gray.

"Drat, if I know, one shot me in the hip with an arrow, and I know nothing more," replied Mr. Brown.

"Come on here, you folks and help me with Willie and let the Indians go, for the poor girl can't stay here all night," I shouted.

I soon had my plans made. So I waded out into the creek of icy cold waters and tried to hold up Willie's head, while the other ten men carried the foot log across to one side, and there we rescued poor Willie. I was afraid if we tried any other plan that the dress would be torned and she might fall into the water.

The men worked in a hurry for it was a wet bunch. Then we had to carry the foot log back so Mrs. Brown could get across.

Willie was allright as quick as she got over her fright. So thanking the men, our party hastened on towards Mr. Brown's, to get dry clothing and be next to a fire.

Yes, of course, I had to spend the night at Mr. Brown's."

O. JOHN.

A TWO BILLION DOLLAR ROBBERY

A statistician for a large insurance company recently estimated that Americans lose at least \$2,000,000,000 a year through fraudulent investment schemes.

Thousands of our citizens are defrauded of their life savings because they fail to take the simplest precautions necessary to successful investing.

The lure of tremendous returns and glittering prospects is an almost "sure" bait for any otherwise intelligent people. They succumb without resistance to the blandishments of the high-pressure salesmen of questionable stocks.

There is but one safeguard against this—knowledge. Few people understand the ramifications of modern finance. The great body of investors must depend on advice.

In America we have a great number of responsible brokers and investment bankers whose business and pleasure it is to discuss with investors securities listed on exacting stock exchanges in leading financial centers.

Investment keeps the wheels of modern industry in motion. But the intelligent citizen, investing money outside his own business buys on the advice of established brokers or

WASHINGTON NEWS LETTER AND COMMENT

A day's doings in the Senate are reported thus; 12 M. to 12:33 P. M. Routine general business. 12:33 P. M. Adjourned.

Well done, thou good and faithful servant.

The Court of Appeals of Kentucky holds that the motto "Kentucky for Progress" may appear on automobile license tags. The tendency to raise the speed limit, and the rapid increase in the number of cars on the highways, call for identification marks which can be read at a glance. Extraneous matter on an auto tag detracts from its legibility, and generalities do not help in spotting a particular car. It is to be hoped that the Kentucky ruling will not be repudied upon as a precedent.

Seven million glasses of beer were consumed in Paris in a single day during the hot wave. It looks as though the Rhine had changed its course.

From Tuesday to Saturday, the wreckage of a fallen airplane lay undiscovered in New Mexico. A half-hundred planes criss-crossed the sky, and Indians and habitants searched country which they knew foot by foot, but for five days the resting place of the ship and its crew remained a mystery. Calamity Jane and Bill Hickok are gone, but in a sense, portions of the West remain wild. By way of comparison, it may be recalled that the body of an aviator that came ashore found upon the coast of Europe, was discovered and buried with due process of law so quickly that when a general search was instituted, it had to be continued among the records of events that had already passed into local history.

Swearing among girls is said to be common, and is condemned as bad, by an expert in juvenile research. Women have the same right as men to swear, but those who look back at childhood through the mist of years, will be inclined to rejoice that they do not see the halo of motherhood surrounding a head from which proceeded the frequent damn.

If a vote were taken to determine the greatest mechanical achievement of the last thirty years, the radio or the flying machine would carry away the majority. Not one in twenty would cast his ballot for the perfected gasoline engine, upon which so much of human pleasure and material prosperity depends. Dr. Langley would have opened the doors to aerial navigation long before flying became even an experimental success, if he had known of a small and compact source of adequate power. Without the internal combustion engine, every automobile would be a mass of junk, and countless agricultural machines, domestic lighting and pumping and pumping plants, and wood-sawing outfits, bear witness to the worth of the little motor that works away forgotten in the darkness of the engine hood.

Somebody in Pennsylvania fastened a quantity of dynamite to a family dog and sent him home. The exploding charge killed the dog, sliced off the front of the house, and injured a child who opened the door when the poor beast whined to be admitted. One cannot think of a meaner man than he who would use the homing instinct of a domestic animal as a means for attempting murder by stealth.

Bobby Jones steps down from the head of the amateur golf class, for the benefit of Johnny Goodman, and Goodman immediately gives place to another in the championship tournament. An analysis of the situation affords no useful information. Bobby was as good a player, on the whole, the day he was beaten, as he was the day before, and Goodman was no worse the afternoon he receive his trimming than he was in the morning, when he got the better of Jones. Shakespeare has abstracted about all the knowledge that is to be obtained from circumstances of this nature when he remarks that there is a tide in the affairs of men, which, taken at its flood, leads on to fortune.

Prof. Casson, of Yale, classes annoyances under nine heads; unpleasant association, interference with pleasant activity, opposing egotendency, identification, retrogression (a tendency to turn to childish modes of behavior), undue familiarity, discards from the body (such as falling hair, inherited tendencies, and considered under one head, customs, conventions, and taboos. The list may not be complete, but the world would be a merrier place if but one of the classes specified did not exist. Every man who resorts to a little honest introspection will find that he is something of a specialist in making his neighbors uncomfortable in at least one of the ways referred to.



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